

## **Region 3 GPRA Baseline RCRA Corrective Action Facility**

# **ICI Americas Inc.**

**Rt 443 West Off Route 309**

**Tamaqua, PA 18252**

**Congressional District 6**

**EPA ID #: PAD000797928**

**Latest Update 12/27/2002**

## **Current Progress at the Site**

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Located in the mountains of Schuylkill County, near Tamaqua, Pennsylvania, this site has made significant progress towards clean-up. EPA is approaching this clean-up with an eye toward partnership with the state regulatory programs and the property owners, ICI Americas Inc. (ICI), in an effort to reduce administrative burdens on all parties.

ICI has notified Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) and EPA that they will voluntarily remediate the site. Currently, EPA does not have a binding agreement (permit or administrative order) with the facility for corrective action activities. The facility is aware of its closure and corrective action obligations under RCRA and HSWA and has structured its clean-up activities toward satisfying these requirements. In July 1997, EPA began providing technical assistance to ICI, with the idea that the clean-up could meet corrective action and public involvement obligations without EPA issuing an administrative order; thus eliminating unnecessary administrative burden and time delays.

ICI has investigated and nearly completed active remediation at its one hundred ten acre parcel. Historic waste disposal and burning occurred at this property and groundwater has been impacted. Investigation began in the late 1980's, and a massive excavation and removal project (approximately 5000 tons of soils and waste in 6 weeks) was completed in 1999. EPA is reviewing investigation and remediation reports. Closure plans and certifications for the RCRA regulated units have been submitted to and are under review by PADEP.

There was a PADEP-required groundwater pump and treat system at the property from 1996 to 1999. ICI started the systems operation in 1996 to remove trichloroethylene and related organic compounds from the groundwater. In October 1999, PADEP approved temporary shut-off of the pumping system to determine if: 1) the system is effective in containing the plume in the fractured bedrock, and 2) organic contaminants in the groundwater were being naturally biodegraded, as ICI has asserted. A final report on the temporary shut-off was submitted in January 2001 and was evaluated by EPA and PADEP. An upgraded monitoring network provided monthly data on the groundwater quality for one year. Subsequently, PADEP approved a reduced-frequency monitoring program for 2001 and 2002. ICI will be making a proposal for future Monitored Natural Attenuation based on the findings of the 2001/2002 monitoring program.

There is existing off-site groundwater contamination adjacent to the site. The owner of two impacted potable-use groundwater wells has been supplied with triple series carbon filtration systems for each residence; bottled water has also been provided. There is no exposure to the residents. ICI is continuing to monitor the off-site and on-site groundwater contamination to ensure that the plume does not grow or move, and that the natural biodegradation activities further reduce the toxicity of the contaminants. EPA and PADEP continue to oversee the plume dynamics.

In September, 2001, EPA determined that the Human Health exposures were controlled at the site. The EI evaluation took into account the soils investigation and removal, as well as the current use of the site. Additional groundwater monitoring data is necessary before EPA will re-evaluate the EI for control of groundwater exposures.

## **Site Description**

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This site property has been used for explosives manufacturing since the early part of the 1900's. Part of the property started out as the Potts Powder Company in 1907 supporting the coal industry in the region. It was purchased by the Atlas Powder Company in 1913 and eventually evolved as ICI Americas Inc. In 1973, ICI divested its holdings in Atlas Powder Company but retained this portion of the property and operated it under the ICI Americas Inc. name. In 1990, ICI repurchased the property it divested in 1973, but continued to operate this property as a separate entity producing ordnance for military applications and air-bag initiators for the automotive safety industry. In 1998, the company ceased operations completely and has been looking to sell it. During major military efforts of the U.S. Government, this facility provided support; converting from commercial to military production for WWII, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War. The federal government was the major end user for the majority of its products.

## **Site Responsibility**

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RCRA Corrective Action activities at the ICI Facility are being conducted as a joint lead by EPA and PADEP. The investigation and any necessary clean up activities are being implemented in accordance with Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program, PADEP's Land Recycling Program, and EPA's Corrective Action program goals. For further details concerning the coordination of these programs at this facility, please refer to the "Current Progress at the Site" section.

## **Contaminants**

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The primary contaminants of concern at this site are: lead, mercury, arsenic, and volatile organic compounds, such as trichloroethylene (TCE), and perchloroethylene.

## **Community Interaction**

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The local municipalities and elected representatives have been involved in the redevelopment of the property from the out-set. The site is listed as a Keystone Opportunity Zone, an incentive program which allows for tax breaks for new owners of the property.

Public notice of the approval of closure plans for RCRA regulated units is provided in the newspaper at the time of approval. EPA is planning to provide public notice and an opportunity to comment on our remediation decisions at the same time for the entire site.

## Government Contacts

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For more information about EPA's corrective action webpage, including Environmental Indicators, please visit our site at: [www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm](http://www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm)

## Facility Contact

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